This month, Ken Richardson, BIGGA’s Education and Training Manager, explains the new minimum BIGGA membership qualification which should be introduced next year.

Education the key to membership

TORO Competitions
Full details of the TORO Student of the Year and Excellence in Greenkeeping Competitions are given elsewhere in this magazine but I would like to add my and Sami’s congratulations to Andrew Pledger and Huw Morgan.

Details of the Student of the Year Competition for 2002 will be sent out in the New Year and copies of brochures and entry forms will be available at BTME.

Minimum Qualifications
The BIGGA Board of Management meeting, held on 9 October 2001, endorsed the introduction of a minimum qualification of N/SVQ Level 2 Sports turf, or equivalent, for all NEW applications for membership received after 1 February 2002. This decision will be subject to the approval of the AGM, which will be held on Wednesday 23 January 2002, at the Majestic Hotel in Harrogate.

Why introduce a minimum qualification?

It is Government policy that all adult workers should be able to work towards, at least, an N/SVQ Level 2 qualification.

BIGGA aims to improve the qualifications and status of greenkeepers.

Greenkeepers want greater recognition and better pay.

Anyone working as a greenkeeper at a golfing establishment should be competent, i.e. should be able to do the job without supervision.

N/SVQ Level 2 Sports turf comprises seven Units which include basic greenkeeping tasks such as mowing, rolling, course preparation, machinery, construction, estate management and plant identification. Therefore, competent greenkeepers can easily become qualified.

BIGGA Membership after February 2002

• All current greenkeeper members will retain full qualified greenkeeper membership.

• All greenkeepers, not currently members, applying for full greenkeeper membership, from 1 February 2002 will need a minimum qualification of N/SVQ Level 2 Sports turf.

• All greenkeepers, not currently members, applying for membership, from 1 February 2002, who do not hold a minimum qualification, will be offered Greenkeeper Assistant Membership.

• The subscriptions for both full Greenkeeper Membership and Greenkeeper Assistant Membership will be the same i.e. Course Manager/Head Greenkeeper £85, Deputy Course Manager/Deputy Head Greenkeeper £67, Greenkeepers aged 21 and over £54, Greenkeepers aged 20 and under £33 and International members £35.

• Greenkeeper members and greenkeeper assistant members will receive the same membership benefits except that unqualified members will not be able to vote at National, Regional and Section meetings nor will they be able to hold office.

• Greenkeeper assistant members may request to be upgraded to full greenkeeper membership once they have become qualified.

• Any full greenkeeper member who is unqualified and leaves the Association for two years or more will be offered Greenkeeper Assistant membership on re-application.

• All current full greenkeeper members, whether qualified or not, will be enrolled onto the BIGGA CPD Scheme automatically.

• All full greenkeeper members will have their Membership reviewed after five years.

• All full greenkeeper members will be granted continued membership if they continue to pay a subscription and work as a greenkeeper at a golfing establishment.

• Those greenkeepers who have held full greenkeeper membership but are not currently working as a greenkeeper at a golfing establishment but remain connected with the Association, greenkeeping or the fine turf industry, should be granted continued full membership.